

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JASPER, INDIANA
NOVEMBER 19, 2008**

A meeting of the Common Council of the City of Jasper, Indiana, was held on Wednesday, November 19, 2008, in the Council Chambers of City Hall located at 610 Main Street, Jasper, Indiana.

Call to Order. Presiding Officer Mayor William J. Schmitt called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call.

Mayor William J. Schmitt	Present
Council members:	
John Schroeder	Present
David Prechtel	Present
Thomas Schmidt	Present
Ambrose 'Butch' Schitter	Present
Kevin Manley	Present
Randall Buchta	Present
Raymond Howard	Present
City Attorney Sandra Hemmerlein	Present
Clerk-Treasurer Juanita S. Boehm	Present

Clerk-Treasurer Juanita Boehm announced that in order to have a quorum for the meeting, a majority of the council members must be in attendance. All of the council members were in attendance; therefore, there was a quorum for the meeting.

Pledge. Mayor Schmitt then invited those present to join him in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of the Minutes:

The following minutes were distributed to and examined by the Council:

1. October 22, 2008 regular Common Council meeting
2. October 22, 2008 6:40 p.m. public hearing about a proposed federally funded community development block grant project that includes sidewalk and storm water improvements to blighted infrastructure

A **motion** was made by Councilmember Ambrose 'Butch' Schitter and seconded by Councilmember Kevin Manley to approve both sets of minutes as published. Motion carried 7-0.

Utility Service Board. General Manager of Utilities Gerald 'Bud' Hauersperger gave a report on the regular monthly Utility Service Board meeting held on November 17, 2008. Copies of the minutes are supplied to each council member.

Jasper Public Library Proposed Building Project Update. Mayor Schmitt said he asked Bob Pfister, the Council appointed library board member, to attend this meeting and give the Council an update on the current library situation.

Pfister 'thanked' Mayor Schmitt for the invitation to present an update on the ongoing studies for a new library building and location. Pfister said he had some prepared text to present then he would take questions.

Bob Pfister stated a new library has been studied and discussed over the past ten years, but in the past three-four years they have been prompted to move forward as the present building is too small. The board has been involved in a lengthy search for a new location and also trying to stay abreast with employee salaries and benefits. The present building has 11,000 sq. ft. and no ample space for a librarian office, computers, books, etc. He further stated that a \$5 million bond would not be enough to build a 30,000 sq. ft. library that the board wishes to build and even if the City deeded the property to the library and they would sell it, location is still an issue. Pfister said the contractual library board is building a 17,000 sq. ft. facility in Ferdinand for \$4 million. He said 17,000 sq. ft does not come close for Jasper's needs and it would not be building for the future. He then named several libraries he visited and he named several locations they are looking at for possible building sites.

Pfister then introduced Bill Shaneyfelt, Attorney for the library building project, Library board member Mary Ellen Backer, and Head Librarian Rita Douthitt.

Councilmember Randy Buchta asked if they could build out at the current site.

Councilmember Ambrose 'Butch' Schitter asked what the minimum square footage would be for now to get us five years down the road. Pfister said he does not recommend constructing a building in phases. Some people would think we could be wasting money. He recommends a minimum of 30,000 sq. ft at this time which is based on circulation and what he learned from seeing other libraries.

Rita Douthitt gave several statistics such as circulation was up 7% for the year, the total circulation in five years increased 33%, and last year 235,000 items were checked out. She commented that people are using the library and there will always be books but the needs are changing.

Mayor Schmitt asked Pfister what changed his mind about the current site. Pfister replied that Douthitt told him to go out and look at other libraries and the architectural design so he took the time to look at other library buildings and he saw issues like the parking and that made him change his mind.

Schmitt asked Pfister how much property he thought the library would need. Pfister said the middle school property is 2.6 acres and he always said three to five acres.

Mayor Schmitt said some people are vocal for it and some are vocal against it so what about the people in between, would he consider doing a survey for what those people think. Pfister said he thinks that's why they were appointed and were appointed to make those decisions. Pfister also said we in no way want to throw taxpayers' money away. The Board made a commitment not to waste money but conditions are "trying at best" for some employees. Mayor Schmitt stated these are tough economic times and this project would be pressing on the taxpayers. Pfister added that tough economic times do not mean we should stop looking at the future.

Mayor Schmitt then asked if a 30,000 sq. ft building is constructed, how many employees would you have to have whether it's one, two, or three stories. Douthitt said currently nineteen people are employed, 8 full time and 11 part time. A 30,000 sq. ft. building on one floor would require 25-26 people and a two-story would require more people. Douthitt also said the library is a public place and someone has to monitor the areas particularly with children around otherwise it is not safe.

Councilmember Ray Howard asked where the Board is in the Middle School relationship with the School Board. Attorney Bill Shaneyfelt said the School Board will be meeting next Monday to pursue this matter. A site has been the biggest issue with the Library Board but a structure has not been as controversial. Shaneyfelt said he feels they need to sell the issue to the council members and to the public because he believes there will be a remonstrance.

Councilmember Ray Howard asked Shaneyfelt such things as what do they expect will happen at the school board meeting, does the Library Board have other plans if the Middle School site is not an option, and will the Board ever agree on a site? Shaneyfelt expressed several of his views such as he thinks the Library Board should not dwell on the Middle School site very long and if the school does not give them a ready to build site, the matter will have to be addressed by the Library Board. Howard stated he has a real concern that this is a long time to go nowhere and the Library Board will be back to square one where they were three years ago if Monday night's School Board meeting does not work out.

Bob Pfister then distributed a packet of statistics and other information that has been researched.

Mayor Schmitt suggested having a joint meeting with the council and library board members to discuss parts of the new property tax law such as the affects of the property tax cap and debt service payments. There were also some comments about when during the proposed building process the Library Board would have to come before the Council for bond approval and what information they should provide to the Council.

JCAC. Jasper Community Arts Commission member Pat Thyen 'thanked' everyone for their support.

ORDINANCE NO. 2008-31 AN ORDINANCE TO TRANSFER APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE CITY OF JASPER, INDIANA, FOR THE REMINDER OF THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2008.

This ordinance contains 2008 budget transfers within departments.

A motion was made by Councilmember Ambrose 'Butch' Schitter, seconded by Councilmember Thomas Schmidt and approved 7-0 to read the ordinance for one reading only. Thereafter, a motion was made by Councilmember Randy Buchta, seconded by Councilmember David Prechtel and approved 7-0 to have the ordinance read by title only. The ordinance was so read. Thereafter, a motion was made by Councilmember Thomas Schmidt and seconded by Councilmember Kevin Manley to pass and adopt Ordinance No. 2008-31. The motion carried 7-0.

Informational meeting. Mayor Schmitt announced that there will be an informational meeting with the firefighters on December 1, 2008 at 5:30 p.m. Doug Todd with McCready and Keene will be available to explain and answer questions about the defined benefit plan proposed benefit values determined by an actuary study.

Adjournment. There being no further business to come before the board, a motion was made by Councilmember Thomas Schmidt and seconded by Councilmember David Prechtel to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried 7-0 and the meeting adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

The minutes were hereby approved _____ with X without corrections or clarification this 17th day of December, 2008.

Mayor William J. Schmitt
Presiding Officer

Attest:

Juanita S. Boehm, Clerk-Treasurer

Margaret A. Kress, Recording Secretary